

Preface

The Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) is the first comprehensive and representative school-based study of youth smoking knowledge, attitudes and beliefs conducted in Macao SAR. This study, which was conducted by the Department of Health, used an internationally standardized instrument that facilitates comparing youth behavior regarding tobacco use at the regional as well as the international level.

Moreover, the study design, data collection and analysis were carried under the direct supervision of the Office on Smoking and Health - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, United States of America (OSH/CDC) and the Tobacco Free Initiative Office – The Western Pacific Region Office of the World Health Organization (TFI/WPRO/WHO).

I. Introduction

1.1 Situation worldwide

Tobacco use is one of the main preventable causes of death in the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) attributes over 4 million deaths a year to tobacco¹, a figure that is expected to rise to 10 million deaths a year by 2030, with 70% of these deaths will be occurring in developing countries. Studies in the developed countries show that most people begin using tobacco before the age of 18 years^{2,3}. Recent trends indicate an earlier age of initiation and rising smoking prevalence rates among children and adolescents. If these patterns continue, tobacco will result in the deaths of 250 million children and adolescents alive today, many of them in the developing world⁴.

The international society, spearheaded by the Tobacco Free Initiative (TFI), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office On Smoking and Health (OSH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has been developing international programs and initiatives to combat this man-made plague which is devastating the lives of millions of people worldwide. However, regardless of the world wide movement against tobacco, tobacco companies still control the tobacco

market. They produce over one trillion sticks, over a billion smokers and influence ever increasing people, especially the young to start smoking every year.

Despite the harm caused by smoking only modest success has been achieved in global tobacco control. It is clear that children and young people are now more at risk than ever before, and they should be the primary focus for intervention strategies.

1.2 Tobacco use in the Macao

In Macao, tobacco is not grown but traded. Tobacco was manufactured into cigarette and more than 50% of the tobacco imports are re-exported to neighboring countries. Smuggling remains a problem. At past, the tobacco industry played an important role in Macao economic in term of “Macao Grand Prix” (a famous car competition race held in Macao annually).

Manufactured cigarettes are the predominant form of tobacco consumed. Filter-tipped cigarettes comprise 97% and unfiltered cigarettes account for 2% of all tobacco products used. Other less frequently encountered tobacco products include “roll-your-own” tobacco and cigars or cigarillos.

In 1997, a regional antismoking law was established. Rules and regulations for tobacco use control were set up in the region to the following:

- Displaying a health warning, nicotine and tar contents on cigarette packs.
- Requiring health warnings on cigarette packet, which must occupy 20% of the whole surface of the cigarette packet.
- Restricting sales of cigarettes to those aged 18 and older.
- Banning advertising in the television, radio stations.
- Banning smoking in the public or private units, in which medical care is given, including the respective waiting rooms, ambulances, first-aid posts, clinics, other similar places and pharmacies;
- Banning smoking in the places for minors less than 18 year old, especially in the establishments for infant care, recreation centers for spare time, colonies for holidays and other congener us places or units;

- Banning smoking in the primary, secondary, technical-professional schools and institutions of higher education, and with regard to the last two cases, excepting the respective dining-halls or similar places;
- Banning smoking in the reception place of the governmental departments, the rooms of electronic games, enclosed sports spaces, cinemas, theatres and other show places in enclosed spaces, museums, libraries, auditoriums, public meeting rooms, reading rooms and room for expositions;
- Banning smoking in the port and airport installations, vehicles and ships that belong to the collective transport of passengers, taxis and elevators.

In addition, the Department of Health launched a smoking or health program in 1996, as well as World No Tobacco Day was commemorated annually by the Department of Health Day, educational and health promotional programs are mostly school-based, periodic public awareness campaigns for health regarding.

Accurate and representative prevalence data on tobacco use among children and young adults are not available. However, a family-based survey conducted in 1997 by Macao Health Department and consumer's council revealed the prevalence of overall tobacco use is 35.8 %, and 31.6% in male and 4.2% in female respectively. A survey for police and teachers conducted by Health Department in 1999, showed that 45.8% in police and 25.3% in teacher smoke or use tobacco, and males were more likely than female to use tobacco.

II. Goals and objectives

The GYTS is a school-based tobacco survey which focuses on adolescents age 13-15 years. It assesses students' attitudes, knowledge and behavior related to tobacco use and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), as well as youth exposure to prevention activities in school curricula, community programs, and media messages aimed at